

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for transmitting information over a communications network having multiple switching nodes, said method comprising:
 - determining if a byte to be transmitted is silent, when the byte is silent
 - attaching a flag to a packet that the byte would have been added to for transmission and suppressing the byte;
 - transmitting the packet to another node;
 - receiving the packet at a destination node;
 - un-suppressing the suppressed byte when the flag indicated suppression has occurred; and
 - wherein each node in the communications network recognizes the flag representing a silent byte.